

## **Notes for SEEP Meeting – Bremen – 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2022**

- **Exponentially Increasing demand for identity (sustainable) cotton.**

Almost all brands are trying to get committed with sustainability, in terms of raw materials and operations. However, lack of knowledge and sincerity is all over the place. Unreasonable demands, such as difficult blend structures, inefficient traceability requirements and unmanageable paperwork requirements hinder the natural flow of operations. Lately, the new requirements of Textile Exchange about tracing the money flow with connection to each individual cotton transaction, is almost impossible to manage.

Moreover, Textile Exchange's latest change in rules about GOTS and OCS

- **Credibility risks for all identity cotton standards, claims of brands & retailers etc.**

Green washing is getting more and more in the forefront as sustainability is used as an easy claim. It seems that TE has been addressing this risk by implementing stricter paperwork rules, instead of focusing on the core problem, which is designing more robust due diligence audits at field level.

- **Lack of collaboration between different sustainable cotton standards and the potential implications for the reputation of cotton in general**

Although not aware about the back ground, it is sad that BCI and CMiA have not extended their agreement. Same feeling I have about the lack of collaboration between BCI and USTP. We have also observed some kind of competition between Organic and BCI implementer in Turkey. Such confusing messages create more question marks in farmer's mind, already exhausted by flood of several sustainability programs.

- **Increasing demand for traceable fibers.**

Increasing demand for sustainable material is not limited to cotton, also for other fibers. Almost in all categories (synthetics, cellulosic and natural fibers) producers are in great effort to create sustainable versions.

- **The latest exotic theme: Regenerative Cotton.**

Regenerative cotton projects are getting more interest from the industry. There are several projects run in different countries. Lack of defined agricultural standards, licensing and certification principles, lack of technical knowhow should be addressed as this practice gets more asked and common.

**Leon Picon**